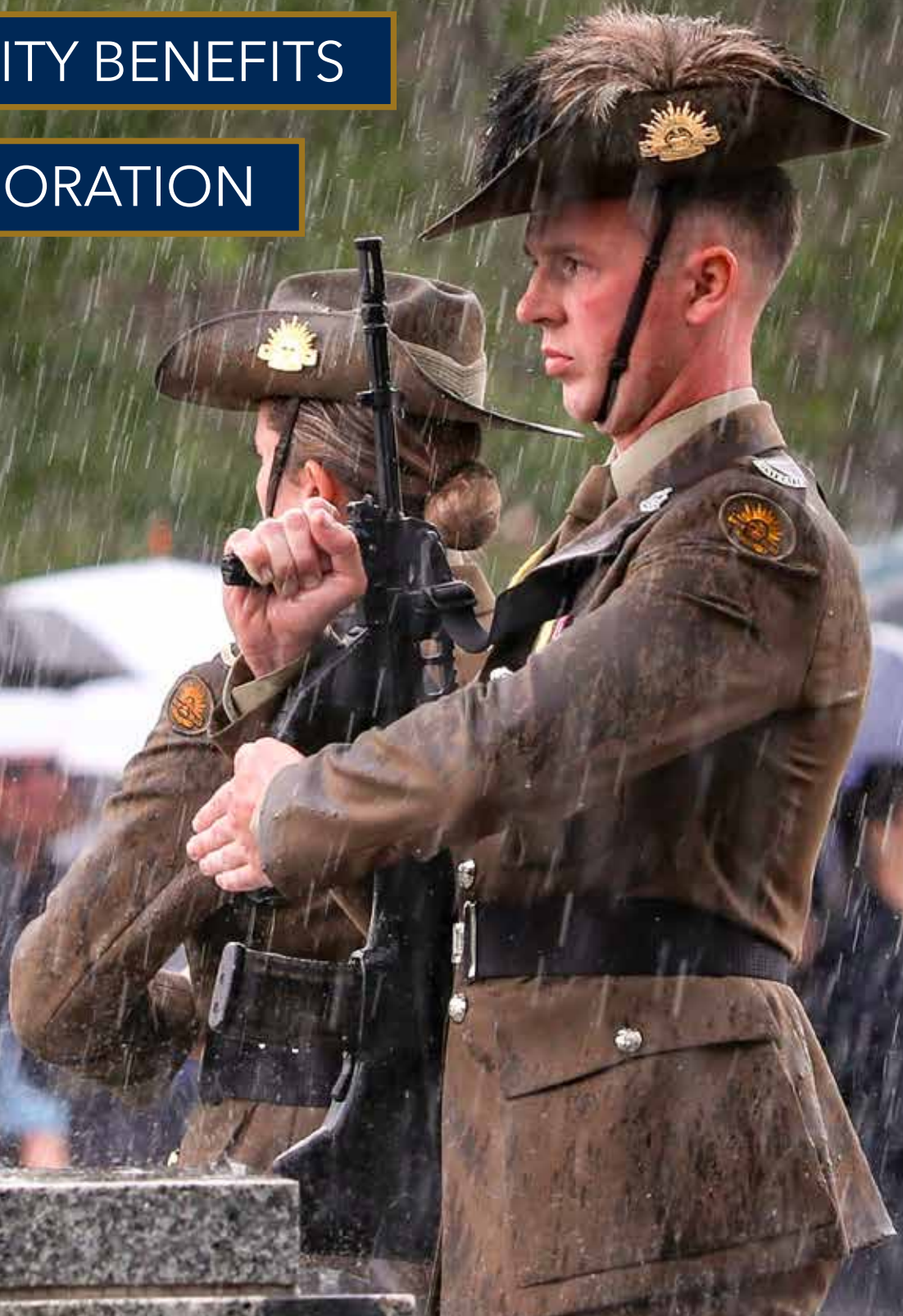


VETERANS SUPPORT

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

COMMEMORATION



Mildura RSL Sub Branch Inc.
2025 Annual Report

INTRODUCTION



Mildura RSL's Mission Statement

The mission of the RSL is to support the wellbeing and betterment of our members serving and ex-serving men and women of the ADF, our allies and their families with provision of welfare and commemorative services and, where appropriate, contribute to worthy needs within the broader community.



Mildura RSL's Vision Statement

The Mildura RSL will strive to provide a first class facility showing a high standard of service and veteran support. We recognise our role in the education of the public, especially young people, on the sacrifices made by those who have served their country. We aim to promote a living community spirit and uphold the values of respect for each other and support of your mates.

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LIFE MEMBERS

† 1960	N.J. NOYCE
† 1963	E.C. VANDENBERG
† 1966	J.W. O'BRIEN
† 1966	W.H. WYNNE
† 1968	J.D. RICHARDS
† 1970	A. THOMSON
† 1978	S.G THOMPSON
† 1989	J.V. CALNAN
† 1992	E.P. GREEN
† 1993	H.A. BAXTER
† 1996	L.J. FRASER
+ 1997	A.B. BOX
† 1997	W.H. DUFF
† 1997	E.A. GRIFFITHS
† 1998	A.K. KENNEWELL
† 1999	R.C. STANDISH
† 1999	R. SHARPE
2000	K.J. BARCLAY
† 2003	S.J. PORKER
† 2003	K.G. DUTTON
† 2004	L.S. ANDRISKE
† 2005	R. HAYNES
† 2006	M.S. WHITING
2007	J.F SEARLE
2010	K. MUSTEY
† 2011	A. WILSON J.P
† 2017	K.M. WRIGHT
2018	P. MCDERMOTT
2022	J. BRANIFF

PAST PRESIDENTS

† 1919-20	G.I. PICTON
† 1921	L. LEVY
† 1922-23	N.F WELLINGTON
† 1924	R. EGGE
† 1925-30	DR H.H. MCWILLIAMS
† 1931-33	W.B.HOARE
† 1934-35	L.W MANSELL
† 1936-37	T.J. HOLMES
† 1938	H.M HARRISON
† 1939-40	T.J. HOLMES
† 1941-44	A. BAILLIE
† 1945	F.J. RANSOM
† 1946-47	A.J. RICE
† 1948-49	C.D. CAMERON
† 1950-54	H.E. DICKINSON
† 1955-56	N.J. NOYCE
† 1957	S.C. MILLS
† 1958	K. BARNES
† 1959	J.P. FARMER
† 1960	T.J.CHAMBERS
† 1961	L. WELLS
† 1962	DR C. BOWMAN
† 1963-64	A. THOMSON
† 1965	C. O'NEILL
† 1966	C.H. BIRD
† 1967-68	A. THOMSON
† 1969 70	F.T. GILSHENAN
† 1971-72	J.W. O'BRIEN
† 1973-74	S.G.THOMPSON
† 1975-76	W. DUFF
† 1977-79	E.P GREEN
† 1980-81	W. DUFF
† 1982-84	P. DALTON
† 1985-86	L.J. FRASER
† 1987	P. DALTON
† 1988-89	F.C RUSSELL
1990-91	R.N.MCCALMAN
† 1992	F.C. RUSSELL
† 1992-93	S.J. PORKER
† 1994-96	E.A. GRIFFITHS
† 1997-02	K.G. DUTTON
2003-04	K.J. BARCLAY
† 2005-10	A.J. WILSON
† 2011-16	A.J. OUCHIRENKO
† 2016-21	G.A. PEARSE

COMMITTEE 2025



PAUL McDERMOTT
PRESIDENT

Paul served 9 years in the RAN Air Branch performing meteorology and navigational tasks. On two occasions Paul served on HMAS Hobart (Gun Ship) in Vietnam. He returned to Mildura in 1975 where he worked in media for over 30 years.



BRAD McGLASHAN
VICE PRESIDENT

Brad served 6 years in the Army and was deployed to East Timor in 2002. Brad stood for the committee with commitment to help bring younger veterans into the RSL and to help with their transition into civilian life.



SCOTT RICHARDS
SECRETARY

Scott served in the Army for more than six years with 3RAR and deployed to Afghanistan in 2017. Originally from Mildura, Scott and his family moved back to the district in 2021.



ROBERT BIRNIE
TREASURER

Robert has served over 10 years in the Army, with the majority of his time spent in the 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment. He has completed numerous tours of Iraq and Timor Leste.



JOSH FRASER
COMMITTEE

Josh is a local veteran whom served in the Australian Army for eight years from 2011 to 2019 as a Paratrooper. Josh was deployed on operations to the Middle East in 2014.



TIM HAWSON
COMMITTEE

Tim served in the Army Reserve for 16 years and Full-Time for 2 years with 6RAR and was deployed to East Timor in 2000. He also served with Victoria Police for 21 years.



MATT GRAY
COMMITTEE

Matt a 19-year Army veteran with service as an infantryman, marine specialist and an intelligence specialist and has 10 years' experience in small business management.



GEOFF INGALL
COMMITTEE

Geoff joined the Australian Regular Army in 1976 and served as an infantry soldier until leaving the army in 1998, completing 22 years service and reaching the rank of Staff Sergeant.



COLIN HAMENCE
COMMITTEE

Colin is the son, brother and nephew of returned servicemen whom served in New Guinea, Vietnam and the Middle East. He is a long time member and supporter of the Mildura RSL.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I'd like to thank everyone for the privilege of being President of Mildura's RSL since 2021. I've been fortunate to follow in the footsteps of some very distinguished gentlemen long gone.

After much thought I consider it's time to stand down and retire from my position and the board as of the 2026 AGM.

I've been a volunteer over 25 years for the RSL including representing the Regional Veterans Centre, as President, and as a pension and welfare officer. I'm proud and fortunate to have achieved a RSL Life membership and to have been recognised for services rendered to the Mildura RSL.

My highlights would be our Branch winning the best RSL Sub Branch in Victoria in 2024, this achievement acknowledged the outstanding work we've done in supporting the health and well being of our community within the Sunraysia district.

Also it's rewarding to see the large crowds that assembled at our commemoration services. Another highlight saw the conclusion by the Dareton's men's shed in handing over the magnificent finished Sabre jet. It has been a labour of love for over five years. All those who contributed must feel extremely proud of their handy work. A big thank you to all those involved.

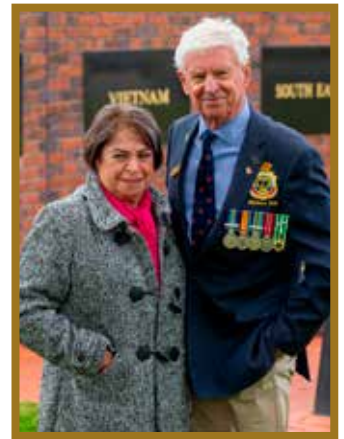
On the down side the most disappointing part of my tenure has been the senseless graffiti at the Cenotaph by serial pests on numerous occasions.

Members should be aware that the committee and in association with the Manager of Veterans Services have instigated the establishment of a memorandum of understanding in collaboration with RSL Vic between ourselves, Red Cliffs/Irymple, Merbein, and Robinvale RSL's. The reason being is to assist with firstly their memorabilia collection, then we need to fully understand their difficulties that they are experiencing with administration and compliance. We are committed to support these RSL Sub Branches in their transition. It's early days at this stage and a work in progress, a favourable result will be achieved in the near future.

In closing I encourage the new and current committee to continue the outstanding work into the future. In addition a big thank you to our reliable staff and our dedicated volunteers for their support.

Paul McDermott

President



Paul and his wife Pat, at the 2025 Vietnam Veterans Day Service.



TREASURER'S REPORT

I am pleased to report that a combined group operational profit of \$1,653,471 was achieved for the 2025 financial year.

Sub-Branch Inc.

The Sub-Branch Inc. (SB) recorded an operating profit of \$1,059,226, representing a substantial increase on the 2024 profit of \$762,934.

Total revenue for the year reached \$12,706,706, an increase of \$610,532 compared to 2024. This growth was driven by strong performance across all three major income streams:

- Bar sales up 18.49%
- Gaming Revenue up 17.59%
- Bistro sales up 5.32%

Operational expenses increased by \$326,357 compared to 2024. However, \$222,731 of this increase related to higher rental charges from the Patriotic Fund. When this is taken into account, the underlying result is very good.

The excellent financial performance of the Sub-Branch during the 2025 financial year has enabled:

- An increase in term deposits of \$600,000
- A reduction in interest-bearing liabilities of \$510,825

Patriotic Fund

The Patriotic Fund (PF) achieved an operating profit of \$594,245.

The PF owns the land and buildings and derives its income primarily from rental charges to the Sub-Branch. These funds are used to maintain the facilities and provide for future capital improvements. In addition, the PF is required to allocate a predetermined percentage of the SB's profitability to veteran welfare.

The improvement in PF profitability in 2025 was largely attributable to an increase in rent charged to the Sub-Branch. The adjustment was made to ensure there are sufficient future cash reserves to fund capital improvements to the building.

During the year:

- \$400,000 in term deposits were established
- All related party loans were extinguished
- Total veteran welfare spend amounted to \$90,183

A valuation of the land and buildings was conducted during the 2025 financial year. Regular valuations are required to ensure the financial statements present a true and fair view of the entity's financial position. As a result of the valuation, a download adjustment of \$1,009,496 was recognised and reflected in the financial statements.

Veteran and Community Spend

During the 2025 year, the Mildura RSL, as a combined entity provided in excess of \$646,000 in direct support to veterans and the wider community.

This support included:

- Employment of a Veteran Advocate and funding of associated office and operational costs
- Direct financial assistance to veterans
- Delivery of RSL Active events
- Discounted lunch or dinner each Wednesday for veterans and their partners
- Complimentary membership, meals and beverages for veterans aged over 80 (reduced from over 85 in July)
- Operational funding for the RAAF Memorial and Museum
- Funding of a custom-made trailer for the Mildura Army Cadets

Substantial community donations were also made to:

- Dr Julie Zrna Centre
- Sunraysia Cancer Resources
- Sunraysia Men's Shed
- Make A Wish Foundation
- Dareton Men's Shed
- CHAILIS

A full listing of organisations and initiatives supported is provided on page 22.

In closing, the Mildura RSL has achieved a very strong financial result in 2025. The organisation remains in a sound financial position, supported by excellent cash reserves and a solid equity base.

Rob Birnie

Treasurer



GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

I am pleased to present the General Manager's Report for 2025, outlining the financial performance, operational outcomes, and strategic progress of the Mildura RSL Sub Branch.

The combined group delivered a strong financial result for the period, recording a net profit of \$1,653,471. This outcome reflects disciplined financial management, increased patronage across our trading operations, and a continued focus on cost control without compromising service standards.

The Sub Branch remains in a sound financial position, with \$5 million currently held in term deposits. This strength enables ongoing reinvestment into facilities, staff development, and continued support for veterans and the broader Sunraysia community.

Overall trading conditions remained positive throughout the year. Revenue growth was driven by strong performance across key operating areas, with Bar sales increasing by 18.49%, supported by strong customer demand, effective pricing strategies, and a continued focus on service quality. Gaming revenue increased by 17.59%, making a significant contribution to the overall result and demonstrating the stability and strength of this revenue stream.

Significant facility improvements were undertaken during 2025 as part of the organisation's ongoing commitment to maintaining a safe, functional, and welcoming environment for members and guests. The Veterans Centre was upgraded with new windows and doors, improving both presentation and functionality, with painting and rendering scheduled for completion in early 2026.

The aging bistro carpet was replaced in February, significantly enhancing the appearance and comfort of the dining area, with new bistro seating installed in August. Within the gaming area, new, more comfortable gaming stools were delivered in mid-April, and billiard tables and snooker bar stools were refreshed and re-upholstered mid-year, improving comfort while extending the life of existing assets. These works were completed with minimal disruption to operations and demonstrate the Sub Branch's continued reinvestment in its facilities.

Membership continued to strengthen throughout 2025, growing to a record number of over 8,300 members, including 480 service members and 720 affiliate members. This growth highlights the continued relevance of the Mildura RSL Sub Branch to both the veteran community and the broader Sunraysia public.

The Mildura RSL Sub Branch continues to play a vital leadership role within the local community, supporting commemorative services, veteran welfare initiatives, and a range of not for profit organisations. This leadership role within the Sunraysia area is expected to expand further in 2026 with the Victorian RSL modernisation project, which proposes that the Red Cliffs/Irymple, Merbein, and Robinvale Sub Branches come under the governance of the Mildura Sub Branch.

Our people remain a key strength of the organisation. I would like to acknowledge Operations Manager Alana Ashelford, Finance Manager Leigh Blenheim, Administration Officer Tammie Doering, and Bistro Service Manager Aaron Davies for their leadership, professionalism, and ongoing contribution to the success of the Sub Branch.

Congratulations are also extended to Michele Vulin on achieving 15 years of service to the Mildura RSL Sub Branch. Her dedication and loyalty are sincerely appreciated.

Looking ahead, the organisation will continue to focus on reinvestment in facilities to enhance accessibility, comfort, and functionality for members and guests. Plans are underway to remodel the Snooker Bar, with a focus on easier access, improved functionality, and an enhanced level of comfort. In addition, the Gaming Room will continue to be progressively upgraded over the next 12 months, ensuring it remains modern, compliant, and aligned with member expectations.

I would like to thank the Mildura Sub Branch Committee and volunteers for their continued support and commitment to the Mildura RSL Sub Branch.

Finally, I would like to make special mention of outgoing RSL President and Life Member, Paul McDermott, and congratulate him on his many years of dedicated service. Over the past 25 years, Paul has volunteered countless hours, making a significant and lasting contribution, particularly in the areas of veterans' welfare and advocacy. His leadership and commitment have had a profound impact on the organisation and the broader veteran community, and his service is sincerely appreciated.

Mark Turlan

General Manager



MANAGER OF VETERANS SERVICES REPORT

The Mildura RSL Veterans Centre continued to provide vital support to veterans and their families throughout 2025. With the continued involvement of Veterans Counsellor Mark Pavilach, the range and depth of services available to our veteran community has further expanded.

My primary role remains the provision of pensions and welfare support to veterans and their families. In addition, I am involved in the administration of the Mildura RSL Retirement Village, which comprises of 20 units, and the conduct of RSL funerals. Other responsibilities include overseeing the operation of the Mildura RSL RAAF Air Museum, coordinating appeals, managing RSL Active events, and administering Commemoration Services.

Throughout 2025, the Mildura RSL conducted Anzac Day, Remembrance Day, Vietnam Veterans Day, and Bombing of Darwin Day ceremonies. The Sub Branch was also included in the production of a video of the RAAF memorial at the Mildura Airport. This video, along with many other is screened at the new entrance of the War Memorial in Canberra.

During the year, more than 100 veterans and their families accessed the Veterans Centre for assistance with DVA claims and welfare support. As a result of this work, more than \$6 million in compensation has been secured for local veterans, along with the granting of Gold Cards and pensions.

RSL Active events held throughout 2025 were extremely well attended and enjoyed by veterans and their families. I would like to sincerely thank Brad and Bree McGlashan for their ongoing dedication and tireless efforts in making these events a success.

Following the release of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide's final report in 2024, the Australian Government adopted almost all of its recommendations. Among the new changes is the



consolidation of the different Acts that claims are lodged under. From the 1st of July, 2026, all new claims will be assessed under the MRCA legislation only. This will streamline the claims process and hopefully, decrease wait times substantially.

I would like to thank President Paul McDermott, General Manager Mark Turlan, and the entire committee for their continued support. Their dedication to the wellbeing of veterans and their families makes the work of the Veterans Centre possible.

I remain committed to supporting all veterans and their families in our community, and my door is always open. I am available weekdays at the Mildura RSL Veterans Services office located in the RSL carpark and can be contacted on 0409 049 290 or email paulmensch@mildurarsl.com.au

Paul Mensch

*Mildura RSL
Manager of Veterans Services*

VOLUNTEERS, GETTING THE JOB DONE

- Veterans Funerals
- RAAF Air Museum
- Anzac Appeal
- Memorabilia
- Poppy Appeal
- Commemoration



FARNSWORTH LOCHHEAD LOWE SCHOLARSHIP

Mildura RSL Sub Branch plays key role in Kokoda Trail Scholarship Journey.

The Member for Mildura, Jade Benham, joined scholarship recipients Hannah Saunders and Rhiannon Jack in successfully completing the Kokoda Trail, marking the end of a profound journey honouring Australia's wartime history and the enduring values of courage, mateship, endurance, and sacrifice.

This trio returned from Papua New Guinea in July after trekking the historic 138-kilometre Kokoda Trail, as part of the Farnsworth Lochhead Lowe Scholarship an initiative auspiced by the Mildura RSL Sub Branch, which has been instrumental in supporting local youth and veterans.

The scholarship itself is named in honour of local soldiers Private Raymond Farnsworth, Warrant Officer John Lochhead, and Lance Corporal Edward Lowe, who each made the ultimate sacrifice. It holds special significance for scholarship winner Rhiannon Jack, who is the great-granddaughter of Warrant Officer Lochhead. Rhiannon was privileged to be the first member of her family to visit her great grandfather's final resting place and pay tribute to his remarkable service.

"It was deeply meaningful to pay tribute to someone who gave so much," Rhiannon said. "I felt proud to stand there and honour his memory on behalf of my family."

The group noted that the experience was both physically and emotionally demanding but deeply rewarding. "This was one of the most challenging and moving experiences of my life," Ms. Benham said. "To complete the trek alongside Hannah and Rhiannon, and to honour the memory of our fallen soldiers from Sunraysia, was incredibly powerful. These young women displayed remarkable resilience, teamwork, and a deep respect for the significance of Kokoda."

Hannah and Rhiannon were selected for their outstanding community involvement and strong connection to the values embodied by the Kokoda Trail. "Walking the Kokoda Trail challenged me in every way," Hannah said. "It taught me so much about resilience, leadership, and the strength that comes from supporting others."

Ms. Benham praised both students for representing the region with pride and integrity. "They have made our community proud," she said. "This experience has shaped them in ways that will last a lifetime."

The Mildura RSL Sub Branch remains committed to fostering such initiatives that not only honour the sacrifices of our servicemen and women but also empower the next generation to carry forward their legacy.



THE LONG RIDE

On Monday, 13th of October, the Mildura RSL proudly hosted members of the The Long Ride for Prostate Cancer to a special dinner. The Long Ride is an organised motorbike ride to a destination in the aim to raise funds and awareness of Prostate Cancer. Motorcyclists from all states and territories ride to the destination, forming lifelong friendships and creating awesome memories. A large contingent of riders descended on the Mildura RSL, for a meal and a well earned rest as they made their way to Esperance in Western Australia. It was an honour to welcome The Long Ride founders Chris and Gail Dunne, who were presented with a \$5,000 donation by Mildura RSL Sub Branch General Manager, Mark Turlan, Vice President Brad McGlashan, and Committee Member, Geoff Ingall. Together the ACT Long Riders raised over \$200,000 for prostate cancer research and awareness.



RSL ANGLING CLUB

Throughout 2025, the Mildura RSL Angling Club conducted monthly fishing trips where they hosted fishing competitions and winners received prize money for the biggest Perch or Murray Cod.

Their membership increased by 20% in 2025 and now boasts 36 members.

The club has continued to fundraise and apply for grants allowing them to purchase 25,000 Golden Perch fingerlings worth \$6,000 that were released below Lock 9.

These fingerlings were purchased from Australian Freshwater Fisheries in

Hopefield NSW and were delivered by Lee Logan.

The club conducts raffles at the Mildura RSL every Saturday afternoon and are extremely grateful to both the RSL and Manager, Mark Turlan for their support.

Anyone interested in becoming a member should contact Wayne Coghill on 0419 123 915.

PICTURED: Angling Club members, Gary Deal, Robert Van Blanken, Fisheries NSW's Lee Logan, Charlie Dowdy and Barry "Sarg" Gilbert.

SCHOOL VISITS IN 2025

In the weeks leading up to Anzac Day, members of the Mildura RSL committee engaged with students across schools, daycares and kinders in the Sunraysia area to promote awareness and understanding of Anzac Day and the experiences of those who served in the Australian Defence Forces.

The committee visited a variety of educational institutions to share the significance of Anzac Day with students from Prep through to Year Six, as well as high school students at St Joseph's College. The schools visited in 2025 included: Mildura South Primary School, Irymple Primary School, Irymple South Primary School, Gol Gol Public School, Nangiloc/Colignan Primary School, The Lake Primary School, Red Cliffs East Primary School, Red Cliffs Primary School, Nichols Point Primary School, Happy Turtle Day Care, TAFE and Mildura Central Early Learning Centre.

During these visits, the committee members received extremely positive reactions

from both students and staff. Students were given the opportunity to try on some Ex-Service uniforms and equipment, which left them wide-eyed and excited. After each presentation, a question-and-answer session allowed students to inquire about a wide range of topics related to military service and Anzac Day. Additionally, a colouring competition was organised for participating schools, with military-themed prizes including books such as "Anzac Ted," "My Granddad Marches on Anzac Day," and other related titles. This initiative was very well received by schools and students alike, enhancing their engagement with the themes of Anzac Day.

There has been a notable increase in interest for these types of visits in 2025, and the Mildura RSL committee is looking forward to continuing this valuable engagement with schools and the community in preparation for Anzac Day in 2026.



RSL RETIREMENT VILLAGE



Shirley Francis moved into the Mildura RSL Retirement Village with her husband Jeff, in 2020. Jeff was a Vietnam Veteran and sadly passed away in 2024.

Shirley loves living at the village and has made friends with her fellow residents. Shirley said that she was always a little shy, but living at the village has bought her out of her shell. She takes part in the Saturday morning RSL Active walks and often goes to the other activities on a monthly basis.

The residents have get togethers regularly at the Archibald Centre at the village and on Tuesday's, the Mildura RSL provides lunch for all of the residents.

It is the sense of community at the village that Shirley enjoys most, and she is very happy that they made the move there six years ago.

SUB BRANCH OF THE YEAR

The Mildura RSL Sub Branch and long-serving volunteer Stephan Hawkes were recognised with top honours at the 2024 RSL Victoria Awards.

The Sub Branch was named RSL Victoria Sub Branch of the Year, acknowledging its long-standing commitment to supporting veterans and their families across the Sunraysia region. General Manager, Mark Turlan said the award reflected the tireless work and vision of recently retired General Manager Kim Archibald, along with the dedication of the committee, staff, and volunteers.

The award also recognised the quality of the Sub Branch's operations and recent facility upgrades, including commemorative displays honouring local servicemen and women from past and present conflicts. The Mildura RSL continues to deliver regular activities for veterans and their

families and has experienced strong membership growth over the past year.

Volunteer Stephan Hawkes was inducted into the RSL Victoria Sub Branch Hall of Fame for his 26 years of service in maintaining and developing the Sub Branch's memorabilia collection. Since 1998, he has worked closely with local families to preserve and honour the service of veterans, contributing significantly to the Sub Branch's commemorative spaces.

Often liaising with families of deceased service members who hope to share and honour their relative's service, Mr Hawkes has taken great pride and enthusiasm in maintaining and continuing to develop and display memorabilia in several areas throughout the Sub Branch.



MILDURA RSL MEMORABILIA REPORT 2025

The display of firearms in Victorian RSLs requires adherence to many rules and regulations.

To get to the point where the Mildura RSLs firearms collection could be displayed has taken a lot of time and effort. Just prior to Christmas, with the assistance of a friend, I was able to securely display most of the firearms in the existing cabinets. I'm hoping to add the pistols to the display later in the year. This requires additional cabinetry and thicker glass. I would like to recognise the efforts of Ryan Preston who was responsible for the deactivation of many of the firearms.

We received a very interesting donation in 2025. I would never have expected to see a 1796 pattern British Light Cavalry Sabre in Mildura. Sadly, we don't have any history on the sword. There are markings on the blade that point to the fact that it may have once been part of the arsenal at Windsor Castle.

As curator of the RSL memorabilia I am always happy to assist veterans and their families with medal entitlements and research. I can be contacted via the Mildura RSL.

Stephan Hawkes

Curator of memorabilia Mildura RSL



RAAF VISITS

The ongoing relationship between the RAAF, the Mildura community and the Mildura RSL was further boosted in 2025 with two separate visits.

In August, two F35 jets from Number 2 Operational Conversion Unit (2OCU) flew from Newcastle to Mildura and performed an aerobatic display for the delighted spectators who had lined the perimeter of the Mildura Airport to catch a glimpse of the RAAF's latest fighter jets. 2OCU have been to Mildura on numerous occasions over the years as Mildura was their former home during WW2.

In October, Number 1 Flight Training School (1FTS) relocated to Mildura for two weeks, where trainee pilots from the RAAF took advantage of Mildura's good weather and open skies.

They held an open day where aircraft were on display and they invited the RAAF Museum to display the newly restored Sabre Jet to be part of the exhibit.

The Mildura RSL has worked hard to foster a great relationship with the RAAF and hope that further visits occur during 2026.

Photos courtesy of Aaron Hawkins



WAR MEMORIAL TRIBUTE

How Mildura commemorates its veterans is showcased in 'Places of Pride', a stirring film commissioned by the Australian War Memorial to screen on loop in its new Main Entrance.

The film carries the same name as the program of the National Register of War Memorials, an Australian War Memorial initiative to record the location and photos of every war memorial across the country.

"With more than 12,000 memorials recorded on the Places of Pride register, the RAAF Memorial at Mildura is one of just 42 locations chosen to feature in this very special film," said Terri-Anne Simmonds, head of Digital Experience at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

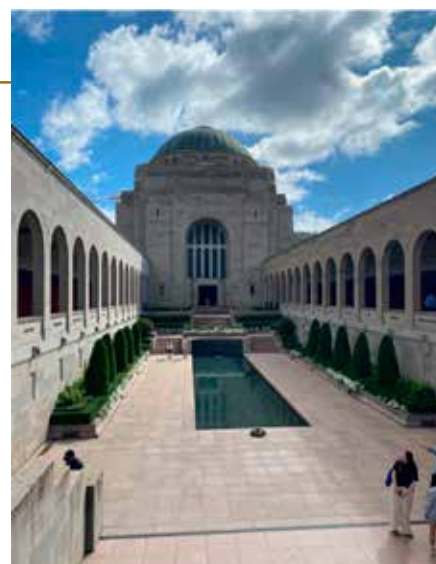
Filming of memorials, commemorative services and the Australians who care for and conduct them, took place across the

nation throughout 2024, with the finished film ready for the opening of the Memorial's new Main Entrance.

Over 28 minutes, following an arc from dawn to dusk, 'Places of Pride' takes viewers on a journey around Australia, showcasing war memorials and commemorations of all kinds and the communities they serve.

Whether a capital city or rural town, every state and territory is featured from Thursday Island off northern Queensland, communities in Tasmania, Newcastle, NSW, Broome, WA, and dozens of places in between.

Alongside the film in the Australian War Memorial's Main Entrance is an Interactive Map Screen where visitors can enter an Australian postcode to search for a memorial in that region.



VIETNAM VETERANS DAY 2025



On Monday, 18th of August, the Mildura RSL Sub Branch conducted a poignant service at the Seventh Street Memorial.

The ceremony commenced at 12.30pm with Mildura RSL President, Mr Paul McDermott giving a tribute to those who served in the Vietnam War.

A healthy crowd was on hand to hear Pastor Clinton Wardle deliver a Prayer of Remembrance and Mildura RSL Sub Branch President, Mr Paul McDermott gave a speech about his time in Vietnam serving in the Navy, and what Vietnam Veterans Day means to him.

On hand to play the Last Post and Reveille was Geoff Dea and Lilliana Bertalli, who once again did a wonderful rendition of Advance Australia Fair.

During the wreath laying ceremony, Gary Klippel sung an acoustic version of the always moving, I Was Only Nineteen, which has become an anthem for those who served in the conflict.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Veterans and their partners were invited back to the Mildura RSL for refreshments.

VETERANS HEALTH WEEK

The Mildura RSL remains committed to supporting initiatives that promote the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families and continues to actively support Veterans Health Week, which is held each October and promoted by the Department of Veterans Affairs in conjunction with RSL Victoria.

The primary event for Veterans Health Week was a river cruise and winery tour, highlighting some of the region's local food and wine offerings. More than 60 veterans and their family members took part in the cruise, which was provided free of charge.

Participants travelled from Mildura to Trentham Estate, a journey of just over two hours. Upon arrival, they were treated to a delightful lunch, wine tasting, and the opportunity to purchase local produce before re-embarking for the return trip. The day provided a relaxing experience, cruising along the Murray River while enjoying quality food, wine, and company.

The Mildura RSL also hosted a veterans expo in conjunction with the local TPI Social Club, showcasing local services available to veterans. The event was also very popular amongst our veteran community.



MILDURA RSL RAAF AIR MUSEUM

2025 was a busy year for the Mildura RSL RAAF Museum and it promises to be even busier in 2026!

One highlight was the completion of the Sabre Jet that had been lovingly restored by the Dareton Men in a Shed over the past 5 years. (It is pictured here on display with a RAAF trainer at the Mildura Airport in October).

Another highlight was the gifting of a Vampire Jet to the Mildura RSL from the RAAF. This aircraft is now at the Dareton Men's Shed and will receive the same loving attention that the Sabre received. Pictured is a newly completed restored Vampire

Jet at RAAF Base Amberley in Queensland. We are hoping for a similar result for us in the coming years.

Thirdly, the Mildura RSL has entered into an agreement to lease Hangar 52, where the Sabre is currently being stored, and it is hoped that the entire RAAF Museum will be relocated there in very early 2026.

This will enable us to continue to tell the story of the RAAF in Mildura during World War 2, and to bring larger crowds to the Museum.

Having these new draw cards will help enhance the appeal of the display.



REMEMBERANCE DAY 2025



On Tuesday, 11th November, the Mildura RSL Sub Branch conducted a poignant service at Henderson Park to commemorate the 107th year since the end of the First World War.

A large crowd was on hand to hear Pastor Clinton Wardle say a prayer of remembrance and Mildura RSL President, Paul McDermott deliver a touching tribute. Flanders Fields was recited by Secretary, Scott

Richards and Vice President, Brad McGlashan, while Treasurer, Robert Birnie delivered The Ode.

The National Anthem was performed beautifully by the Brass band and Abby Collihole, while Don Mayne played the Last Post and Reveille. The 8/7th Army Reserve Unit provided the Cenotaph Guard on the day.

Poppy Appeal Raised **\$19,968.96**

LIFE MEMBERS



Ken Mustey

Ken served in Vietnam in 1966 and 1967 and joined the Mildura RSL in 1989. During the 1970s Ken was a founding member of the Mildura Vietnam Veterans Association and played a pivotal role in having a memorial constructed to honour those locals who served in Vietnam, Korea and South East Asia.

For more than 25 years Ken was a member of the Mildura RSL's Honour Roll Steering Committee which oversaw the introduction of Honour Rolls into Henderson Park.

WW1 photos on display on our screens are from Ken's collection.



Ken Barclay

Ken served in the Army for 10 years including a deployment to Vietnam and Papua New Guinea.

Ken was instrumental in establishing the Sunraysia Regional Veterans Centre and has worked tirelessly for 20 years supporting veterans, widows and their dependants with pension and welfare support.

It would be fair to say Ken has helped improve the well being of some 1000 veterans. This is an exemplarity contribution to the veteran community.



John Searle

John was born in 1945 and joined the RSL on returning from active service in Vietnam in 1968.

In recent years John played a crucial role in the education of school children in the Mildura area in his role as the Mildura RSL's Education Officer. He has been involved in supporting veterans through his volunteer work with the Sunraysia Regional Veterans Centre, but his real passion is getting younger people to understand and appreciate Australian Military history. John is extremely proud of the Mildura RSL and continues to offer his support in any way possible.



Paul McDermott

Paul served nine years in the RAN including a deployment to Vietnam.

In 2001 Paul became a volunteer at the Sunraysia Regional Veterans Centre and in that capacity has been assisting veterans, serving members of the ADF, war widows and their dependants for over 18 Years.

Paul continues to support veterans and is the current Mildura RSL President.



John Braniff

John had a distinguished military career serving with 3RAR/ SAS Coy and SAS Regt. During his service John was deployed to Vietnam, Borneo, the Philippines and Papua New Guinea.

John joined the Mildura RSL Sub Branch in 2003 and was elected to the position of Treasurer in 2008 and held that position until 2023.

Coming from a corporate background John has been the corner stone of the Mildura RSL committee. His astute manner has helped steer the Mildura RSL through many complex matters.

MILDURA ARMY CADETS

The Mildura Army Cadets received a much needed boost in 2025, with the Mildura RSL Sub Branch financing the manufacture and purchase of a new trailer.

The trailer will be used for years to come to carry equipment and supplies needed for camps and trips undertaken by the Cadets.

More than 30 percent of Army Cadets go on to join the military and the organisation is an important training and recruitment ground for the ADF.

There are more Army Cadets currently in Australia than there are soldiers in the Australian Army.

Federal funding for the program is limited, leaving Cadet units to fundraise for themselves for much needed equipment.

The donation by the Mildura RSL Sub Branch will be a great asset for the Mildura Army Cadets.



ABBY COLLIHOLE

In May 2025, Abby Collihole was selected to represent Cricket Without Borders, travelling to Japan for two weeks to participate in two cricket tournaments. She was one of only six Australians invited to take part in this prestigious opportunity.

Both tournaments were held in the town of Sano, approximately two hours from Tokyo, which is a major centre for cricket in Japan. She participated in the Under 16 tournament in the role of playing coach and mentor, assisting with the development of young Japanese players while also competing alongside them. This experience was particularly significant, as several of the girls had never previously played a full game of cricket. Being involved in their first competitive experiences was both rewarding and memorable.

Throughout the tournament, she developed strong connections with the players while also gaining valuable coaching experience, supporting young athletes to achieve their highest potential. She finished third overall in the MVP count for the Under 16 competition.

During the tour, she also trained alongside high-level Japanese coaches, gaining further insight into her own performance and learning new techniques to improve both her bowling and batting.

In the Under 19 tournament, she continued to demonstrate her abilities with both bat and ball, while experiencing the growing depth of talent within Japanese women's cricket. Her team finished third overall, a strong result, particularly as it was the first major tournament for several of the players. At the conclusion of the competition, she was awarded MVP and highest run scorer for the tournament. The strong support from her teammates contributed significantly to the success of the experience.

This opportunity was made possible through the generous support of the Mildura RSL. Their assistance was greatly appreciated, and she was proud to represent both the organisation and the region with pride and honour.



VAMPIRE JET GIFTED TO THE MILDURA RSL

After the fantastic result of the restoration of the Sabre Jet by the Dareton Men in a Shed, the RAAF reached out to the Mildura RSL to see if we were interested in a new project.

Manager of Veterans Services, Paul Mensch and Greg Wood from the Dareton Men in a Shed, flew to RAAF Base Amberly, outside of Brisbane to inspect the "slightly used" Vampire jet that was on offer.

It was agreed that there were more than enough components to make a

fine display example of the jet and the Deed of Gift was signed by the Mildura RSL.

A major term of the gifting of the jet was "where is, as is" so it was up to the Mildura RSL to organise transportation of the components to the Dareton Men's Shed. This was completed in late September 2025, and work has commenced on the restoration.

New members have joined the Dareton Men's Shed, purely to work on this new project.



RSL ACTIVE

Throughout 2025, the Mildura RSL continued to host RSL Active events for veterans and their families.

These events have been extremely well attended and enjoyed by all of those who have taken part.

In February, it was Smashing Axes, followed by Easter Family Day at Lake Cullulleraine.

In May, we held a family fun day of archery and in June it was Laser Tag.

In July, we headed to Benetook Farms for a BBQ and family activities and in August we went Ten Pin Bowling.

A family BBQ and activities was held at Jaycee Park in September and October saw us head to the Mildura

Fire Station for an open day.

In late November we were back at Lake Cullulleraine for our Christmas party, and everyone had a ball. We had close to 100 people attend the event and Santa made a visit.

Throughout the year we also had our weekly walking group that met every Saturday morning at lock 11 for an hours walk followed by a coffee and a catch up.

A huge thanks to Brad and Bree McGlashan who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make it all happen.



2025 VETERAN SUPPORT & COMMUNITY BENEFIT

*Financial Support — \$646,896

Veterans Support/Commemoration:

- Welfare/Pensions Office
- Veterans & Family Welfare Grants
- RSL Vic. League Support
- Veteran meals
- RSL Active
- Veterans & widows garden maintenance
- Veterans & widows home maintenance
- Memorial maintenance
- RAAF Memorial & Museum
- TPI
- Vietnam veteran book research

Community Support:

- Dareton Mens Shed
- Mallee Living Histories project
- Farnsworth Lochhead Lowe Scholarship
- Lisa Cooper Research
- Mildura Army Cadets
- Mildura Bowls Club
- Mildura District Brass Band
- Day for Girls Mildura
- Mildura Health Foundation
- Mildura Pipe Band
- Prostate Cancer Foundation
- Sunikids Dreams
- Mildura RSL Retirement Village
- Sunraysia Cancer Resources
- Sunraysia District Scouts
- Sunraysia Mens Shed
- The Diggers Guild
- Sunraysia Snooker and Billiards Assc.
- 8/7th Army Reserves
- Make-a-Wish Foundation
- Dr Julie Zrna Centre
- CHAILIS

*As per the Audited Accounts for the:-

Mildura RSL Sub Branch Inc.

Mildura RSL Sub Branch Inc. Welfare Agency Account

Mildura RSL Sub Branch Inc. Patriotic Fund





- VALE -

The Mildura RSL recognises the passing
of the following service members during 2025.

Bruce Hurrell - RAAF

Ian Horbury - Army

Thomas Gledhill - Army

Brian Barnes - Army

John Matthews - RAAF

Ian Gardiner - Army

Neville Crellin - Army

Peter Whitfield - Army

Dean Stevens - RAAF

Leslie Hartley - Army

Leon (Tubby) Ramsey - RAN

Mildura RSL Sub Branch Inc. extends its' deepest sympathy to the
families and loved ones of our departed comrades.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them.

Lest We Forget



Mildura RSL Sub Branch Inc.

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Raoul and Herault Gelly of Irymple, both joined the AIF on the 1st of April 1916, as part of the 6th Battalion. They left Melbourne on the 28th of July 1916, bound for France, where Raoul was awarded the Military Medal. Both Brothers returned to Mildura in 1919.